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CHALLENGE

FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM · LUCHE POR EL COMUNISMO · PLP

THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

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MAY DAY 2018

BUILD WORKERS' POWER



BROOKLYN



COLOMBIA



RUSSIA



MADAGASCAR



CHICAGO



MEXICO

JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

OUR FIGHT

✰Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

✰The dictatorship of the working class — communism—can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

✰Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

✰While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

✰Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society's benefits and burdens.

✰Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

✰Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women— sexism—and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

✰Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

✰Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

✰Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

CONTACT US

Email

desafio.challenge@gmail.com

Mail

Box 808 GPO, Brooklyn, NY 11202

Internet

www.plp.org

challengenewspaper.wordpress.com

Twitter: @PLPchallenge

Facebook: Challenge Desafio

WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

CHALLENGE is for the working class, produced by the working class. The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual.

While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

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Editorial

Israeli apartheid decimates Gaza workers, exacerbates rivalries

It doesn't matter if they shoot me or not. Death or life—it's the same thing.

—Saber al-Gerim, 22, protester at Gaza border, New York Times, April 30.

For the two million working-class people in the occupied Gaza Strip, the world's largest concentration camp, life is indeed the same as death. Since the latest Palestinian rebellion began on March 30, the apartheid state of Israel has murdered at least 45 people and wounded over five thousand more. A United States in decline can no longer control Israel, its regional watchdog. Amid intensifying inter-imperialist competition with Russia and China, the resulting turbulence in the Middle East is further destabilizing the old U.S.-dominated liberal world order.

Nakba Day

The Palestinian protests are expected to peak on May 15, Nakba ("Catastrophe") Day, the 70th anniversary of the creation of the officially racist nation of Israel, when over 700,000 Arab workers and their families were displaced and exiled. The day before, a new U.S. embassy is set to open in the divided city of Jerusalem—a move by Donald Trump to pander to his racist base and underline the fact that the "two-state solution," conceived to give the Palestinian nationalist bosses an independent state, is dead. The future is a one-state solution, with the Zionist bosses continuing to exploit, oppress, and brutalize an Arab majority from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea.

As Nakba Day draws near, Iran-aligned Hamas is organizing tens of thousands of protesters to storm the Israeli border. But Hamas, the Islamic nationalists who have administered occupied Gaza since 2007, has nothing to offer workers there except futile terrorism and misguided martyrdom. Given the imbalance of forces—Palestinian rocks against Israeli assault rifles and hand grenades—May 15 looks likely to be a bloodbath.

Meanwhile, the world's capitalist bosses—including those in the Arab world—have turned their backs on Palestinian workers and their suffering. For the first time, a Saudi boss, Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman, reportedly backed Israel's "right" to an apartheid regime (Ma'an News Agency, 5/1). The U.S.-aligned bosses' silence on the Gaza rebellion reflects their real priority—keeping regional rival Iran in check.

Gaza, a concentration camp

The Middle East is a victim of unvarnished imperialism, with ceaseless competition and wars for resources (oil) and profits (ExxonMobil). The smaller bosses, from Hamas to Al Fatah (the group that runs the West Bank under Israeli rule), protect their petty fiefdoms but do nothing for Palestinian workers. All of these capitalists, big and small, share a total disregard for working-class lives. Gaza contains 1.3 million refugees. Among workers under 30, 65 percent are unemployed. Living conditions are unspeakable:

"United Nations officials warn that Gaza is nearing total collapse, with medical supplies dwindling, clinics closing and 12-hour power failures threatening hospitals. The water is almost entirely undrinkable, and raw sewage is befouling beaches and fishing grounds. Israeli officials and aid workers are bracing for a cholera outbreak any day" (NYT, 2/11).

The Palestinian workers truly have nothing to lose.

Israel, U.S. watchdog

With the world's largest reserves of cheaply extractable oil, the Middle East is a powder keg for world war, with U.S.-backed Saudi Arabia and Russia- and China-backed Iran at each other's throats. Israel enjoys advanced weaponry, military research, and funding in collaboration with the U.S. Why? Because Israel serves to check Russian imperialist aggression.

While fighting wars against Arab states, the Israeli bosses have also waged a vicious campaign to subjugate the Palestinians. They have brutally suppressed two intifadas (rebellions), built electronic fences, bulldozed Palestinian villages. Their jet fighters bomb the homes of supposed terrorists (children who threw rocks were imprisoned for years)—when they're not bombing schools and hospitals. Now they are using snipers and hand grenades against unarmed protesters in Gaza. And while conditions in Gaza get ever more desperate, the Israeli government has allocated a billion dollars to build an underground concrete fence to further blockade and isolate the workers there.

Complications for U.S. bosses

Yet as we have seen throughout the world, the working class keeps fighting back—and now the workers of Gaza are leading the way. Against insurmountable odds, they are risking their lives to break out of their prison. They are once again exposing the Israeli rulers as racist war criminals.

The new U.S. Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, a former Tea Party congressman, is unmoved by the atrocities committed by the Zionists' Nazi regime: "We do believe the Israelis have the right to defend themselves, and we're fully supportive of that" (Wall Street Journal, 4/30). But while Pompeo's racist analysis reflects the interests of the U.S. profit system, the bosses are divided. The main-wing, finance capitalists would prefer to rule with a cover of liberal "democracy." As Roger Cohen, an arch-imperialist who represents the stance of these main-wing bosses, wrote in the April 20 New York Times: "As usual Israel overreaches, an eye for an eyelash."

With a weakened U.S. unable to rein in their vicious dog, a virulent Israel gives Iran and Iran's Russian backers more runway to build their own axis of power—a scenario that can only hasten World War III.

Workers have no borders

The job of Progressive Labor Party is to lead the workers everywhere to turn imperialist war into a revolutionary war for communism. The working class has no borders. With communist revolution, we will tear down every fence and wall—real and imaginary—that divides us. We are one international Party and one international working class. We have nothing to lose but our chains.✪

The creation of Israel

Reprinted from CHALLENGE 1/10

All national boundaries are drawn to protect ruling-class interests. In 1947, the UN adopted a partition plan to succeed the British colonial mandate over Palestine. This was the original "two-state solution," which led to the violent ethnic cleansing of hundreds of thousands of Arab workers from Israel, the new "Jewish state"; an adjacent "Arab state" that united with neighboring Jordan; and placement of the city of Jerusalem under UN trusteeship.

Although Jewish settlers had owned less than 7 percent of Palestine's territory, the partition gave them 56 percent of Palestine's land. As Itzhak Galnoor noted in The Partition of Palestine: Decision Crossroads in the Zionist Movement, much of the Jewish state was in the Negev desert, a "vital land bridge protecting British interests from the Suez Canal to Iraq."

The UN plan enabled British and U.S. imperialists to divide and control workers in the region. Pitting Arab and Jewish workers against one another has served the capitalist bosses by preventing workers from uniting and fighting their common oppressors. Ever since its creation, Israel's racist Zionist regime has been of strategic significance for U.S. imperialism.

Arrested while working: racist police terror everywhere



Protest against deportations at Gary-Chicago Airport on February 23

@PLPchallenge

Challenge Desafio

INDIANA, April 28—Members of the Progressive Labor Party in Indiana have been connecting with community members through collective fight back against deportations, arrests, and racist police murders.

On Tuesday, April 24, eight workers were arrested by ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) while doing construction work on an apartment complex in Highland, Indiana. This vicious attack subjects workers and their families to the psychological terror that the police continue to inflict on working class communities.

Mothers Against Police Violence

After finding out about the police terror these workers experienced, members of Progressive Labor Party immediately met, got in contact with friends and coworkers, and together organized a response.

The day after the arrests, PL'ers held an event with an anti-racist campus organization and a local Black Lives Matter chapter. The event, titled "Mothers Against Police Violence", prioritized the voices of two mothers who have also experienced racist police terror, when their sons were murdered by kkkops.

One mother noted that a third to a half of violent encounters with law enforcement involved people with disabilities. She shared stories about her son, who had autism spectrum disorder, and was murdered by kkkops in their own home while she was asleep.

Making connections

Discussions at the event connected kkkop murders with the eight workers arrested just the day before as well as the deportations that occur at the Gary International Airport, every Friday.

All point to a common enemy: a racist police state permitted only by kkkapitalism. Attendees of this event were invited to rally at the apartment complex along with other community members who organize against racist deportations out of Gary International Airport. They were called on to oppose the killer kkkops that killed fifteen-year-old KeMonte Cobbs in Gary and fifteen-year-old Stephon Watts in Calumet City.

Through collective action, the PL'ers and friends successfully united 30 community members, with militant chants denouncing racism and police terror in all forms. While one protester urged the community to vote out our oppressors, a PL'er stressed the importance of direct action, stating that we will only change this racist system when we come together as one: the international working class. Racist police terror is everywhere, and it only gets worse under capitalism.

The struggle to unite these struggles continues, and our Party will continue fighting to link them to our growing movement for communist revolution. Only communism can abolish the police state and provide true justice for our class. Join us!✪

Columbia grad students on strike

NEW YORK CITY, April 25—The Columbia University campus resounded with the chants of hundreds of graduate teaching and research assistants who began a five-day strike yesterday. They are supported by many undergraduate students, including about 50 undergraduate clubs, many professors, area construction workers, and other campus United Auto Workers (UAW) locals.

Graduate students do a large bulk of the teaching, grading, and even research their professors. In December 2016, they voted to join the UAW, at a time when the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) had asserted that these students are to be considered workers. For all the teaching and grading of papers they do, they are demanding a living wage, on-time pay, better health care, and protection from sexual harassment.

Columbia has refused to bargain with them, has appealed the decision in court, and is hoping that Trump's new anti-union appointee to the NLRB will be approved and the recognition of grad students as workers will be reversed. But after waiting over 18 months for Columbia to "come to the table" and with a 90 percent strike authorization vote, the workers' action began. Many classes have been cancelled or moved off campus.

Columbia's anti-worker stance is nothing new. This week marks the 50th anniversary of the massive student strike and occupation of 1968, when students protested Columbia's takeover of a park in Harlem to build a gym for students and the University's participation in research supporting the Vietnam War. The action lasted a week and ended with the brutal arrests of over 700 students.

Columbia is still run by a Board of Trustees 75 percent of whom are bankers and it has now taken over a huge portion of Harlem and displaced thousands of low-income, mostly Black residents. It continues to educate an elite student body to become the managers, political and financial leaders of worldwide capitalism, and the scientists and academics who will oversee the U.S. attempt to maintain economic and military control in the world.



The last five years have witnessed an upsurge in student activism, stimulated by the summer of Occupy Wall Street. One group, Student Worker Solidarity (SWS), has fought for the rights and wages of campus workers and undergraduate student workers. Other groups have formed around divesting from fossil fuels, fighting racist speakers and racism on and off campus, supporting Palestinian workers, and other issues.

PLP members have been welcomed into SWS, and we continue to struggle with students about the need for revolution to abolish all exploitation of workers, and to join PLP to make that happen. Many hate capitalism, but have not yet been convinced that all reforms are temporary and that a long-range plan to change the system is necessary and possible. A five-day strike may not win any concessions, but it has heightened the class-consciousness of many. It is our job to build on this energy and win participants to a life-long journey of struggle with the ultimate goal of communist revolution.✪

PLP MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS

BROOKLYN



Three hundred gathered for this May Day march and celebration. They embraced each other with hugs, smiles, and exchanges of "Happy May Day!"

Future leaders of the international working class, newer workers and students being introduced to the Progressive Labor Party got the opportunity to meet many courageous communist workers as we all strengthened our ties as working people.

For communists, May Day is both a historical reminder of the relentless brutality of capitalist oppression, and a source of revolutionary optimism showing workers glimpses of what is necessary to destroy that same system of vicious inequality.

May Day marks a new year of fightback

"One World, One Class, One Party" was our theme of this new year. This message was embodied in every aspect that shaped this militant demonstration. Families with children, older workers, couples, classmates, co-workers, individuals of different genders and races marched alongside each other and embraced the energy of each other and the workers who witnessed along the streets.

Dancing and chanting in the streets

We went through a mainly working-class Caribbean, Latin, and Black neighborhood. All along the march, participants and observers were electrified by the chants being led by PLP with their conviction and enthusiasm.

Combined with some infectious beats, the lines of these political chants were a tool of mass popular education to clarify for those within reach what we mean when we say "Fight For Communism!"

Passersby stopped along the sidewalks, came out of stores, looked out the windows of their apartments, turned in our direction from within buses and cars, and listened to the youth on the sound truck encourage workers everywhere to overthrow capitalism through communist revolution!

Many workers danced on the sidewalks as they watched us pass by. Many working-class people put their fists up with us when we called for "Workers' Power (Este Puno Si Se Ve, Los Obreros Al Poder)!"

Many nodded with their fists in the air, moving to the beat of the music, when we chanted, "Fight Back!" against all the crimes bosses inflict on us as their wage slaves. Others were compelled by our energy to join us. Two thousand workers received CHALLENGE, our revolutionary communist newspaper. We also distributed almost 500 copies of a special edition of Le Défi, our newspaper in French and Haitian Creole.

At a moment mass culture encourages individuals to take digital videos and photos of distinctive significance in their lives. A critical mass of workers that encountered our demonstration took out their phones and captured and shared our call to join PLP and struggle to emancipate all workers from capitalist exploitation.

Bosses' terrified of workers' potential

Imperialist bosses everywhere are terrified of losing their domination over workers as they steal the surplus value (profit) that we produce. They will do everything in their power to hide or distort the historical significance of May Day for our future—the need to liberate the force of all production, the international multiracial working class, from capitalist domination.

All of the militant demonstrations being waged by PLP around the world this May Day, such as the one in New York, demonstrate that bosses can only do so much to stop workers from organizing against them as violent oppressors.

No matter where you are, join us not only on May Day but also in PLP in developing the courage and confidence of all workers in uniting and fighting for a communist future!✪

OAKLAND



PLP members and friends had an international contingent in the May Day March in Oakland. We marched with the Sin Fronteras (No Borders) coalition of immigrant, anti-racist, and labor groups. We carried red flags and our banner read, "Workers of the World Unite , We have Nothing to Lose but Our Chains , Trabajadores del Mundo Unámonos, Lo Unico que Vamos a Perder son Nuestras Cadenas."

We Chanted and others joined in: "Workers Struggles have no borders," "Obrereos Unidos Hamas Seran Vencidos." "Queremos Trabajo, La Migra al Carajo" "Kick the bosses in the ass, power to the working class."

Earlier in the day, the International Longshore Warehouse union (ILWU) shut down the ports of California in honor of May Day and as an anti-racist action against police murders of Black and Latin youth.✪

SOUTH INDIA

On the occasion of May Day 2018, we revolutionaries from India extend the warmest and most sincere greetings to PLP and all working people of the U.S. who are keeping high the banner of May Day.

This day is a symbol of the revolutionary potential of working people, people who make human society with their sweat and intellect, but fruits of whose labors are taken away by exploiting classes.

Recently, India has seen a rising tide of strike struggles and mass protest actions by workers in auto and other manufacturing industries, airlines, railways and road transport, banking and insurance, hospitals and numerous other sectors.

Workers in modern service sectors have started forming unions to resist capitalist super-exploitation. Peasants and tribal peoples are resisting the corporate land grab.

There is widespread discontent and anger against the fascist nature of the present bourgeois rule. The ruling classes of India are able to rule because they succeed in dividing and persecuting working people on the basis of caste, gender, religion, nation and region like racism in the U.S., so as to keep the working class and people divided and terrorized into submission.

We are facing the growing menace of religious fascism, even graver than the earlier times. Communalism (religious nationalism), ethnic nationalism, Casteism in virulent forms are transforming both the physical and mental geography of India. They turned the country in to a slaughter house for the wealth and power of the ruling class and ruling parties.

It is a special form of class struggle against all divisive fascist tendencies to build class unity and class consciousness to proceed to overcome the exploitation, oppression, discrimination, cruelty, stupidity, and greed that still rule our world.

May Day is a symbol of not just national but international unity of the working class. We along with working people of the world solemnly salute the memory of workers of Chicago and U.S. who were killed by police and fought for an eight-hour workday. It is essential for the working people of the world to keep its spirit alive and hold high the flag.

May the first of May mark the world working class to cherish and stand for a new Spring, a new season in which we working people of the world hold together internationally to fight for a classless society.✪

PLP MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS

CHICAGO



Fifty comrades and friends of Progressive Labor Party rallied and marched through the streets of Bronzeville to celebrate May Day 2018. PLP has been having regular CHALLENGE sales in the neighborhood for years— lately every week—with an enthusiastic response from the community. It is a historically Black area that has been the home to workers and communists since the 1920s.

We rallied with red flags and signs against racist deportations and mass incarceration.There were specific messages about killer kkkop Jason Van Dyke, who murdered teenager Laquan McDonald by shooting him 16 times. We shouted anti-racist, pro-international working class chants, and distributed over 400 CHALLENGEs during our two-hour rally and march.

A young man who had been arrested while attending a court hearing for Van Dyke's pre-trial motions gave an impassioned speech on the bullhorn. He pointed out that he lost his freedom and his job for calling for justice, while Van Dyke is still free and working.This racist, capitalist system will always protect kkkops and punish workers to maintain itself. This is why we chanted, "The cops, the courts, the Ku Klux Klan: all are part of the bosses' plan!"

One world, one international working class, one party

After the march we had a dinner and dynamic program, with just over 90 people and families attending. The main speech was given by a young comrade who focused on the inspirational international fight back that is happening around the world and in the US. He linked the struggle of striking nurses in Zimbabwe to striking teachers in West Virginia and other states, and striking health care workers in Illinois. He explained how holding state power (controlling the military, the police, the press, the schools, and the workers through dead-end reform groups) is the way capitalists are able to continue to exploit our class. He pointed out that true freedom can only be won when the international working class, led by a mass PLP, captures state power.

The comrade linked the policies enforced by Clinton, Bush, Obama and Trump: imperialist war, deportations, mass incarceration. His speech was inspiring and made it clear that "we have to be in it to win it!" He talked about our Party organizing 30 workers in only three days in Indiana to protest an ICE raid where eight construction workers were arrested at work (see page 3). After the speech, we had table-talks about whether reform movements can create lasting change and if non-violent revolution is possible. The discussions that followed were inspiring, and were followed up by a call for all in attendance to continue these conversations and actions by joining the Party and study groups.

Ey ta, ta ta!

The program highlighted the importance of a fighting and politicized international working class. We read aloud letters from comrades from around the world: Iran, Iraq, Ecuador, Pakistan, China, and Afghanistan (see some on page 6).We chanted (both during the rally and at the dinner) a slogan from the anti-apartheid struggles in South Africa, "Ey Ta, Ta Ta!," which mimics the sound of an AK-47 fired by workers to shut down the fascist system during revolution.

We also heard from the mother of a KeMonte Cobbs, a young Black teen murdered by the police in Gary, Indiana last year. There's been no reason as to why her son was gunned down by killer kkkop Justin Hedrick.She has bravely called out the lies and conflicting stories in the police reports and is fighting for justice for her family.

Through their mass organization, comrades have stood with the family, highlighting that true justice can never be won from appealing to killer kkkops and their murderous system. Her story and strength showed both the personal effects of this racist system, as well as the strength and ability the working class has to challenge the system.

We ended the evening with fists up, singing the International; another inspiring May Day celebration with friends and comrades. Onward to another year of communist organizing!✪

LOS ANGELES



When a young Black teacher and a Latin high school student who are friends of Progressive Labor Party emcee our May Day dinner, you know it will be an inspiring event! These two young women led 60 comrades, families and friends through an interactive, enlightening program complete with good food, music, poetry, games, banner painting, and speeches. At the end of the night, every person in the room wanted to find out about how to get more involved.

The theme of the night "Smash Capitalism with Multi-Racial Unity" shined through all aspects of the event. The main speech took lessons from Kent, Ohio and South Africa about organizing multi-racial unity. Then after analyzing the world situation, the whole room sounded off about what they are doing to change this.

Communist trivia, table talk, and poetry

We followed this with a trivia game based on the latest issue of CHALLENGE. The entire room fell silent—except for the sound of shuffling pages, as competitive communists and friends furiously read articles looking for the answers. The "winner" was happy to take home a year subscription to the paper as her prize.

We moved table talk, engaging participants in a discussion around what it will take to destroy capitalism.

And what May Day dinner would be complete without a Langston Hughes poem? Two high school students from the base of PLP gave a stirring rendition of "Open Letter to the South" (*see poem excerpt on page 6*). This reinforced the message of the night that freedom for the working class starts with multi-racial unity.

We closed the night with 60 fists in the air singing "The Internationale".

March in dark times

This event then encouraged many to march on May 1st with PLP. Although small, we were able to participate in two different May Day marches across Los Angeles.

Our banner, created by the participants of the May Day dinner, led the way both politically and aesthetically. One thousand workers on the street went home with a copy of CHALLENGE and thousands more chanted and cheered in celebration of the working class.

The marches were considerably smaller than last year, which is telling, given the raids and terror campaign against immigrant workers. Having said that, for the young Black teacher who marched with us for the first time and rocked our "Fight Back" chant, May Day was empowering. For us, it brought a swell of energy which was really inspiring for our small group.

The digging into mass organizations and on-the-job work in Los Angeles is paying off. This May Day dinner and march would not have been possible without our friends' organization and leadership. We strive to convert these efforts into recruitment and consolidation.✪

INTERNATIONAL MAY DAY GREETINGS



MAY DAY IN SOUTH AFRICA—Workers campaign around a national minimum wage and miserable working conditions.

AFGHANISTAN

Greetings from communist youth of Afghanistan to all PLP everywhere! We take this opportunity to send our greetings and love to all our communist friends in these historical days of May. Our success is our unity. Long life to our all communist friends, long life to our all revolutionary youth of Afghanistan and all over the world!

★

NORTHERN INDIA

Comrades! Red Salute to you, one and all, on 132nd International Workers' Day from northern part of India. The world today feels more affirmatively than ever the need of an international working class organization to convert the bubbles of opportunities into a sustained stream of communist revolution to change the world for once and all. Today, amidst the rising atrocities against ethnic and religious minorities, women, we join hands across the globe to reaffirm the solidarity shown by the Chicago comrades on the first May Day.

Tomorrow is ours. Long live revolution!

★

IRAN

Workers of the world UNITE under the triumphant flag of the PLP! One class, one party, one struggle, one world to win. The workers of Iran send our strongest message of solidarity to the workers in the USA and everywhere, for the May Day anniversary. Special salute to the members and supporters of PLP everywhere!

★

PAKISTAN

The working class of Pakistan is struggling against exploitation, poverty and low class consciousness. We are striving amid the vigorous terrorism spread by the bosses to keep the working class passive against their atrocities.

The bosses are using the fundamentalism (religious fascism) and nationalism to divide the working class. We in the PLP are struggling to bring unity among the poor workers and peasants. We are organizing the poor masses against the bosses under the red flag of PLP. Workers are being deprived of every right; they are being terrorized at the work places and at the streets. May Day gives us an opportunity to bring working class people closer to our line by organizing rallies and demonstrations.

One day we will win. Long live Communism and the PLP.

★

LETTERS

No Party, no revolution

Greetings Comrades! I have been forced to miss this May Day celebration — for the first time in 47 years — because of having to attend a memorial service for a dear friend. However, I would like to send you an appropriate historical note.

In 1944, the then head of the old Communist Party, Earl Browder, had called a mass meeting in Madison Square Garden attended by 20,000 party members. He proposed dissolving the party and setting up a "political association."

My 24-year-old sister came back from the meeting all aglow with the new development. My father, a pretty insightful communist himself, listened to her description, as I did, who was all of 14 at the time. When she finished, he said, "Let me ask you one thing: how can you make a revolution without a Communist Party?"

She thought about this and said, "Pop, you've got a point."

And so I greet you comrades, who ARE that communist party that WILL make that revolution which my father cherished. Carry on!

★★★★★

More convinced than ever

Today May Day is observed in almost every country in the world. International Workers Day began with a massive strike in Chicago in 1886, a strike for the 8-hour workday that ended in trials that sentenced a number of workers to death. This injustice was the beginning of the observation of May Day.

On Saturday, April 28 I attended the Brooklyn march and dinner sponsored by the Progressive Labor Party with many comrades and friends. It was militant and well organized.

I left stronger and more convinced than ever that the only way to liberate our class is communist revolution.

On May 1, comrades and I marched with workers from non-profit organizations. We in PLP know that these organizations offer cover for the powerful bosses who only give us crumbs from their grand cake. Together with our friends we supported the protest in front of big banks that finance and profit from private detention jails where immigrants are sent to await deportation.

But we know that the effort to reform the capitalist system only pacifies us and builds illusions in the capitalists' fake "democracy."

The only real objective is to fight, fight, fight to take power: "See this fist, workers to power" is our chant. We must make communist revolution because we will never live well under capitalism. To protest is good, but we must prepare ourselves for revolution—for a just society with schools, health and work for our whole class. No bosses, no profits, no borders, no racism, no sexism, no wars and no bosses who exploit and enslave us. Long live International Workers Day!

★★★★★



Open Letter to the South*

by communist fighter Langston Hughes

White workers of the South
Miners,
Farmers,
Mechanics,
Shop girls,
Railway men,
Servants,
GREETINGS!

I am the black worker,
Listen:
That the land might be ours,
And the mines and the factories and the office towers;
That the plants and the roads and the tools of power
Be ours:

Let us become, you and I,
One single hand
That can united rise
To smash the old dead dogmas of the past-
To kill the lies of color
That keep the rich enthroned
And drive us to the time-clock and the plow
Helpless, stupid, scattered, and alone-as now-
Race against race,
Because one is black,
Another white of face.

Let us together, say:
"You are my brother, black or white,
You my sister-now-today!"
on every lynching tree, a poster crying FREE
Because, O poor white workers,
You have linked your hands with me.

Now we see
In union lies our strength.
Let unions be
The force that breaks the time-clock,
Smashes misery,
Takes land,
Takes factories,
Railroads, ships and dams,
Until the forces of the world
Are ours!
White worker,
Here is my hand.
Today,
We're Man to Man**.

*excerpted
**by man to man, we mean worker to worker.

LA: Anti-imperialist protesters decry war in Syria



LOS ANGELES—When the U.S. bosses expanded the Middle East war by targeting Syria's ruling class and moving the U.S. into a more direct military conflict with Russian bosses, 3 students from the local health university showed up on a day's notice to join the PLP contingent marching against the war downtown. Unlike the previous anti-gun violence march or Women's March which drew thousands of unaffiliated workers, most workers who joined ANSWER Coalition's demonstration were with revisionist groups.

A small group of nationalist Syrian workers supported the Syrian ruling class, carrying a Syrian flag and large Assad posters. Clearly, the Democratic Party and their sellout unions who are struggling to build patriotism for sending ground troops into the Middle East and elsewhere are not going to spend millions to supporting the anti-war movement like they have with the previous marches mentioned.

In fact, Trump's excuse for bombing Syrian workers following supposed chemical weapons use was in response to the "red line" Obama drew during his presidency. With Russian jets, tanks, and ground troops this marks the first time a foreign imperialist power has set foot in the Middle East--other than the U.S—since World War II. As the U.S. global hegemony and control of Middle Eastern oil has continued to weaken since their failed wars in Iraq, this new presence of Russian bosses is a further indication that larger war is imminent. Short of an all-out military invasion with U.S. and likely European Union troops, their regional hold and global power will further diminish. We cannot predict when or where, but it's a slippery slope to World War III.

Our involvement in the current movement is crucial, particularly for Black, Latin, immigrant and Muslim workers largely absent from the anti-war movement during the Bush years. The racist U.S. bosses will sacrifice these workers first on the frontlines for their profits.

Thus, it was a significant that three Black future healthcare workers, one whom is an Iraq War veteran, marched with PLP and brought a revolutionary message to the small crowd. These three Party friends have participated in Party study groups and social events and after May Day. The plan is to recruit them. It's a modest and yet significant development for our work here in Los Angeles.

It's also a testament that even within this period of war and fascism, we can move our class, even if in small numbers, right now.

Just as these new set of bombings in Syria can quickly spillover into a World War III, our small work now, could lead to waves of growth of our organization, and the fight for communism.✪

RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

Below are excerpts from mainstream newspapers that may be of use for our readers. Abbreviations: NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly, LAT=Los Angeles Times

U.S. imperialists expand shadow war in West & North Africa

NYT, 2/22 — Air Base 201, Niger — Rising from…African scrubland, a half-finished drone base represents the newest front in America's global shadow war….

…Air Force personnel are feverishly working to complete a $110 million airfield that…will be used to…strike…deep into West and North Africa, a region where most Americans have no idea the country is fighting….[and] reflect a largely undeclared American military buildup outside the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan, often with murky authorities and little public attention, unfolding in…Yemen, Somalia and, increasingly, West Africa.

In Niger alone,…the Pentagon has doubled…U.S. troops to about 800….

…The expanding scope of operations in Africa surfaced…when it was revealed that the United States had carried out four airstrikes in Libya….

…Nigerien forces and their American advisors are preparing other major military operations….

Building a new base in this remote landlocked country nearly twice the size of Texas marks the latest chapter in the military's contentious history of drone operations around the world….

President Barack Obama ordered the first 100 American troops to Niger in February 2013 to help set up…drone operations.

Racism endangers Black women in childbirth

NYT, 4/21 — The rate of maternal mortality in the United States…has risen by more than half since 1990….because of alarmingly high rates among black women, who nationally are three times as likely to die in pregnancy or childbirth as white women.

In New York City….Black women are…are 12 times as likely to die from childbirth-related causes as white women….roughly comparable to complications in Sierra Leone….

…One city study found that black college-educated women were more than twice as likely to experience severe complications from childbirth as white women without a high school diploma.

Latinas and Asian women also experience higher rates of severe and potentially life-threatening complications….The dangers black women face in pregnancy and childbirth…are compounded by racism, unconscious biases in health care and the long-term anxieties…that come with being an African-American woman.

"She is subjected to a lifetime of stressors," said…[the]associate director of Population Studies Center...at the University of Michigan….connect[ing] the toxic pressures of racism faced by black women…."they are stressors that can impact your health."

Nicaragua: thousands battle cops

(NYT, 4/21) — Extraordinary protests against the government of President Daniel Ortega [saw]…thousands of demonstrators [take] to the streets…clashing with government security forces and barricading neighborhoods in opposition to newly announced changes in the social security program.

At least three people, including a police officer, have been killed…and dozens…wounded….

…The protests are among the largest and most violent in Nicaragua's recent history….also tapped growing discontent with the government….

Among the modifications,…employees…must contribute more to the social security system, and retirees will see a reduction in their pensions….

Demonstrations initially erupted in Managua and León but soon spread to at least 10 other cities….

Videos…have shown protesters wearing motorcycle helmets for protection, throwing rocks and homemade fire bombs at armed police…who have…[fired] tear gas and rubber bullets….

…A leader of a peasants' movement vowed to mobilize…thousands and march on Managua.

U.S. history: lynch mobs murdered Black women, too

NYT, 4/29 — …Eliza Woods "was taken from the county jail and stripped naked and hung up in the courthouse yard and her body riddled with bullets and left exposed to view!"

At least 130 black women were murdered by lynch mobs from 1830 to 1930. This violence against black women had largely been ignored or forgotten….

When most Americans imagine lynching, they envision the tortured and mutilated body of a black man accused of raping a white woman. They rarely think of a black woman "stripped naked and hung." [Ida B.] Wells, however, was well aware that black women were victims of Southern mob violence and also targets of rape by white men….

In "Southern Horrors," Wells made clear that white men perpetrated sexual violence against black women, while black men were brutalized by white mobs for having consensual sex with white women….

…By showing that only about 30 percent of the black victims of lynch mobs had been accused of rape, Wells challenged the idea that lynchings resulted from it.

She argued that the portrayal of black men as rapists put them "beyond the pale of human sympathy." And…such a focus concealed the rape of black women….

…Alone, she was not able to stop lynching. But….

A history of lynching must remember black women like Eliza Woods….The rape of black women devastated communities. And it highlights how black women organized against rape and lynching.

MAY DAY—INT'L WORKERS' DAY

PUERTO RICO



MEXICO



"The coming together of communists to unapologetically march for their beliefs was amazing. The May Day march was powerful and absolutely inspirational for the future."

"It was electric, being amongst fellow comrades all fighting for communist revolution. I was empowered by the love and determination of the PLP."

"May Day gave me a family! I felt a connection with my class across the globe. It was awesome! We commemorated workers organizing mass movements. Power to working people!"

HAITI



Comrades, comrades, comrades:

In the name of our struggle against the exploitation of the working class, in the name of our struggle for a better world, a world without classes, without racism and sexism, we greet you and wish you a successful May Day, the day of the international working class.

Unfortunately, the struggle is becoming more difficult; workers are becoming more and more alienated in spite of the degradation of their material conditions of existence and the revolting crimes of worldwide imperialism committed against the lives of millions of our sisters and brothers. In Haiti, the PLP is fighting alongside the workers, urban and rural, and students, in for a living wage, against the corruption and militarism of the imperialists and their lackeys, to guarantee that workers, who create all value, have the power to determine our own destiny. It is only our class that can give ourselves all the necessities for a decent life.

It is for this reason that we must today recall what our class has accomplished in the fight for liberty. We must always fight back against the campaigns of the bourgeoisie in all countries that wants to turn this day, a day rich in the lessons of history of the struggles to build revolution, into a day of festivities. May Day is not a festival, but rather a day for reflection and evaluation and consolidation of our willingness to fight together.

Comrades, May Day is the day the working class, the day of those like us, fight for a communist world, an egalitarian and just world.

Vive May Day!

Vive the Progressive Labor Party!

Vive communist revolution!

From the friends and comrades of PLP in Haiti, always ready!✪

ISRAEL-PALESTINE

Times are tough for the working class in Israel-Palestine. The horrors of capitalism threaten to destroy us. Fascism is on the march. The Israeli Defense Force (IDF) murders Palestinians on the Gaza border in unprecedented numbers (see page 2). The IDF murdered dozens of unarmed Palestinian demonstrators in Gaza and wounded over a thousand. The snipers on the Gaza border filmed themselves laughing and celebrating the carnage.

But we do not lose hope. We hold on to the dream of revolution and liberation. We are well aware that revolution might take generations to make, but we know that this dark night shall have its end, in a red dawn.

The system is in crisis and the Israeli government is discarding liberalism. Prime Minister Netanyahu and Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked move to discipline the High Court of Justice. This court is of course racist, authorizing torture and assassinations of Palestinian militants. It, however, did try to maintain a liberal facade, which is no longer seems viable for the Israeli rulers.

The "Im Tirtzu" movement—openly fascist group and connected to the Prime Minister's Office—scapegoat liberal groups as "traitors". As Zionism feels the ground crumbling under its feet, it cannot rule through liberalism. Israel is showing its true nature: fascist and genocidal.

But, workers are fighting back. The government tried to deport 38,000 Black migrant workers to their almost-certain death. A mass multiracial movement smashed this attempt, and the mass deportation-or-prison plan is cancelled for now. Their lives remain in limbo. Class struggle at work places continues. The working class still marches, and we are proud to be part of that march.

Long live the Progressive Labor Party and communism!✪

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